

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the method comprising:

receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;

retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item includes generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;

forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

returning the container response to the application.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

identifying a cached entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information item; and

retrieving the cached entitlement information item from a local storage.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, wherein the cached entitlement information is in the form of a container.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the step of determining an information provider includes determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the step of retrieving the given entitlement information item includes:

generating a retrieval client for each one of the plurality of information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the retrieval client each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the information providers.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 5, wherein the retrieved given entitlement information item entitlement information retrieved for all of the retrieval clients is in the form of a container.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the access manager includes a rules engine.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 8, wherein the response is an extensible markup language document entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the web server to obtain a service therefrom.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for dynamic access decision information retrieval, the apparatus comprising:

receipt means for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;

determination means for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;

retrieval means for retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the retrieval means includes means for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;

forming means for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and

returning means for returning the container response to the application.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

means for caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

13. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, further comprising:

means for identifying a cached entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information item; and

means for retrieving the cached entitlement information item from a local storage.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the cached entitlement information is in the form of a container.

15. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the determination means for determining an information provider includes means for determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the retrieval means includes:

means for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider each one of the retrieval clients comprises means for retrieving entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 15, wherein the retrieval client each one of the retrieval clients generates a protocol module to form a plurality of protocol modules, and wherein the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider each one of the protocol modules retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with using a provider specific protocol that is compatible with the given one of the information providers.

17. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the ~~retrieved given entitlement information item~~ entitlement information retrieved for all of the retrieval clients is in the form of a container.

18. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the application is an access manager that is operatively coupled to a web server that receives entity requests from the entity across a network.

19. (Currently Amended) The apparatus of claim [[11]] 18, wherein the ~~response is an extensible markup language document~~ entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the web server to obtain a service therefrom.

20. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a computer program product tangibly embodied therein, wherein the computer program product is operable in a data processing system, in a computer readable medium, for providing dynamic access decision information retrieval, the computer program product comprising:

- instructions for receiving a request for access decision information from an application, wherein the request identifies one or more entitlement information items for an entity and an identity of the entity;
- instructions for determining an information provider for a given entitlement information item within the one or more entitlement information items;
- instructions for retrieving the given entitlement information item from the information provider, wherein the instructions for retrieving includes instructions for generating a retrieval client, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider;
- instructions for forming a response, wherein the response includes the one or more entitlement information items; and
- instructions for returning the ~~container~~ response to the application.

21. (Original) The computer program product of claim 20, further comprising:

- instructions for caching the retrieved given entitlement information item in a local storage.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the request includes a plurality of information items, wherein the step of determining an information provider includes determining a given information provider for each one of the plurality of information items to form a plurality of information providers, and wherein the instructions for retrieving the given entitlement information item include:

instructions for generating a retrieval client for each one of the plurality of information providers to form a plurality of retrieval clients, wherein the retrieval client retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider each one of the retrieval clients retrieves entitlement information from a given one of the information providers that it is associated with.

23. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the retrieval client generates a protocol module and wherein the protocol module retrieves the given entitlement information item from the information provider using a provider specific protocol.

24. (Original) The computer program product of claim 22, wherein the retrieved given entitlement information item is in the form of a container.

25. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 20, wherein the response is an extensible markup language document entity is a user, and wherein the user contacts the application to obtain a service therefrom.